



**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
AGENDA LETTER**

**Agenda Number:**

**Clerk of the Board of Supervisors**  
105 E. Anapamu Street, Suite 407  
Santa Barbara, CA 93101  
(805) 568-2240

**Submitted on:**  
**(COB Stamp)**

**Department Name:** Behavioral Wellness  
**Department No.:** 043  
**Agenda Date:** October 7, 2025  
**Placement:** Administrative Agenda  
**Estimated Time:** N/A  
**Continued Item:** No  
**If Yes, date from:** N/A  
**Vote Required:** Majority

**TO:** Board of Supervisors  
**FROM:** Department Director(s): Antonette Navarro, LMFT, Director, Behavioral Wellness  
Contact: Antonette Navarro, LMFT, Director, Behavioral Wellness  
**SUBJECT:** Proposed Amendment to the Santa Barbara County Behavioral Wellness Commission Bylaws

DS  
AN

**County Counsel Concurrence**

As to form: Yes

**Other Concurrence:**

As to form: N/A

**Auditor-Controller Concurrence**

As to form: N/A

**Recommended Actions:**

That the Board of Supervisors:

- a) Approve the proposed third amendment to the Santa Barbara County Behavioral Wellness Commission Bylaws; and
- b) Determine that the above-recommended action is not a project that is subject to environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section 15378(b)(5), finding that the action consists of an administrative activity of government that will not result in direct or indirect physical changes in the environment.

**Summary Text:**

The proposed amendment will begin to align the Behavioral Wellness Commission with the Behavioral Health Services Act (BHSA) that is being implemented throughout the State of California in 2026. Some standard terms are changing, including the term mental health which will now be referred to as behavioral health. In addition, this amendment will update the process for public hearings and the Commission's membership.

**Discussion:**

The Santa Barbara County Behavioral Wellness Commission (Commission) requests that the Board of Supervisors approve the proposed third amendment to the Commission's bylaws to update and clarify certain language and terms. Included in this third amendment is an update to the bylaws to

include an update to the Welfare and Institutions Code 5604 regarding public hearings for the new three-year Behavioral Health Services plan including requirements for public hearings and reporting; adding requirements for the appointment of at least one employee of a local education agency, at least one veteran or veteran advocate, and adding clarification that at least one member of the consumer representation be an individual who is 25 years of age or younger to the Commission, each for a three year term. Finally, the amendment changes the Commission's meeting procedures to grant the Chair the authority to allow individual public speakers for up to-three minutes.

The Commission is currently requesting approval of the third amendment to the bylaws. This amendment will implement changes to align the Commission's bylaws with the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) Behavioral Health Services Act (BHSA). The BHSA will transition away from the former reference to mental health services that were a part of the Mental Health Services Act of 2004. This change will now implement the term "behavioral health services" as an example of the term changes for the integration to the BHSA.

The third amendment will also update the Commission's duties according to BHSA (WIC5963.03 (b)(d)), established pursuant to Welfare & Institutions Code Section 5604, regarding public hearings. The Commission will conduct public hearings on the Behavioral Health Services (BHS) three-year program and expenditure draft, annual plan updates, and annual written report to the Board of Supervisors and DHCS. The Commission will submit a written report of any substantive recommendations not previously included.

The third amendment also expands the Commission membership appointments to include at least one member who is an employee of the local education agency, one member who is a veteran or veteran advocate, and adding a clarification that at least one member of the consumer representation be an individual who is 25 years of age or younger.

Additionally, the third amendment makes a change to the meeting procedures about public input on the agenda and the time allotted for individual public comment to be up to three minutes at the discretion of the Chair.

**Background:**

The Advisory Board on Alcohol and Other Drug Problems (Advisory Board) was created by the Board of Supervisors in January of 1992, and the Santa Barbara County Mental Health Commission (MHC) was established in May of 1993. Both entities served to obtain comprehensive, broad-based input from the community and other sources, review the community's needs, services, and facilities, advise the governing bodies of alcohol and drug services and mental health programs, respectively, and to review program performance to ensure quality of services.

On December 13, 2016, at the request of the Advisory Board and MHC, the Board of Supervisors adopted a Resolution that established a newly integrated Behavioral Wellness Commission to replace the Advisory Board and MHC. The Behavioral Wellness Commission (Commission) reflects the structure of the Behavioral Wellness Department, which offers an integrated continuum of prevention, intervention, treatment services, and support for substance use, mental health, and co-occurring disorders. As part of this action, the Board of Supervisors also approved the founding bylaws for the newly formed Behavioral Wellness Commission.

As was stated above, the Board of Supervisors approved the original bylaws on December 13, 2016. In addition, the Board of Supervisors approved two subsequent amendments, a first amendment on October 5, 2021, and a second amendment on May 7, 2024.

The Commission has spent several months working on this amendment to the bylaws and voted to approve the changes on September 17, 2025.

**Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:**

N/A

**Staffing Impacts:**

N/A

**Special Instructions:**

Please send one (1) Minute Order to BWell Contracts Division at [msimongersuk@sbcbswell.org](mailto:msimongersuk@sbcbswell.org); [bwellcontractsstaff@sbcbswell.org](mailto:bwellcontractsstaff@sbcbswell.org); and BWell Commission Administrator at [khaugh@sbcbswell.org](mailto:khaugh@sbcbswell.org).

**Attachments:**

**Attachment A** – BWC Amended Bylaws Third Amendment (Clean Copy)

**Attachment B** – BWC Amended Bylaws Third Amendment (Draft Redline Copy)

**Attachment C** - BWC Amended Bylaws (Approved 5/07/2024)

**Attachment D** - BWC Amended Bylaws (Approved 10/5/2021)

**Attachment E** - BWC Original Bylaws (Approved 12/13/16)

**Contact Information:**

M. Simon-Gersuk  
Contract and Procurement Manager  
[msimongersuk@sbcbswell.org](mailto:msimongersuk@sbcbswell.org)